№ 10.

Light in Darkneſs,

OR

DELIVERANCE

Proclaimed unto the

CHURCH,

IN

The midſt of all her Deſpondencies and Diſcouragements.

In

A SERMON

Preached by

THOMAS WATSON,

Novemb. 17. 1678.

London, Printed in the Year, 1679.

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Pſal. 112. v. 4.

Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs.

THE Scripture (as *Chryſoſtome* ſays) is a *Spiritual Paradiſe*. The Book of *Pſalms* is placed in the *midſt* of this *Paradiſe*.

The *Pſalms* are not only for *Delight*, but for *Uſe*: like thoſe *Trees of the Sanctuary* in *Ezekiel*, which were both for *Food*, and for *Medicine*.

The *Pſalms* of *David* are commenſurate and exactly fitted to every Chriſtians condition; If his *Affections* are *frozen*, here he may fetch *Fire*; if his *Grace* be *weak*, here he may fetch *Armour*; If his *Spirits* are ready to *faint*, here he may fetch *Cordials* for his *Soul*: Amongſt other Divine *Conſolations*, the *Text* is not the leaſt,----

Unto

Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs.

Which words are calculated for the *Comfort* of the *Godly*, in all Ages and Centuries of the Church.

This Text is like *Iſrael's Pillar of Fire* in the *Wilderneſs* : or, like the *Mariners Lanthorn*, that gives *Light* in a *Dark Night*.

Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs.

Let me Explain the Words e're I come to the *Propoſition*

1. *To the Upright.*] Who are here meant by the *Upright*?

The *Hebrew* word for *Uprigl t*, ſignifies *Plainneſs of Heart*. The *Upright Man* is without *Colluſion* or *Fraud*; *In whoſe Spirit there is no Guile*, Pſal. 32. 2. He that is *Upright*, his *Heart* and his *Tongue* go together, as a well-made *Dial*, goes exactly by the *Sun*.

The Words following in the Text, may ſerve for a ſhort *Paraphraſe* to ſhew us, who this *Upright Man* is, the Text ſayes

He

He is { *Gracious*, *Full of Compaſſion*, *Righteous*.

Firſt, The *Upright Man* is *Gracious*: That implies his *Holineſs*.

Secondly, He is *Full of Compaſſion*: That implies his *Charitableneſs*. And,

Thirdly, He is *Righteous*: That implies his *Juſtneſs*.

He is *Gracious*, therefore he *fears God*.

He is *Full of Compaſſion*, therefore he *feeds the Poor*.

He is *Righteous*, therefore he *does to others as he would have them do to him*.

This is the *Upright Man*.

In ſhort; He is one that does act from a right *Principle*, and that is *Faith*: By a right *Rule*, and that is *Scripture*: To a right *End*, and that is, *God's glory*. Here's a man *downright Upright*.

2. The ſecond thing in the Text is, There ariſeth [*Light*] to the Upright. What's meant by *Light* here?

By *Light* metaphorically is meant *Delight* and *Comfort*, or *Joy*. That's here meant by *Light*.

Eſther

Esther 8. 16. *The Jews had* Light, *and* Gladness, *and* Joy. *Light* when it springs in, doth much *revive*. *Light is sweet*. *Joy* is to the *Heart*, as *Light* is to the *Eye*, *Exhilarating* and *Refreshing*. That's the second Word: There ariseth [*Light*] that is, *Joy* and *Comfort*.

3. There ariseth Light in [*Darkness*] What's meant here by *Darkness*?

By *Darkness* is meant *Trouble* and *Sorrow*, *Res adversæ*. In *Isa*. 8. 22. *They shall look unto the Earth, and behold* Trouble, *and* Darkness. By *Darkness* is meant *Trouble*. *Darkness* is very *Disconsolate* and *Affrighting*: It makes every thing like the *Terrors of the Night*; Such is *Trouble*; Such is *Affliction*; 'tis *Affrighting*: It makes every thing like the *Terrours of the Night*.

So much for the *Explaining* of the Words.

To the Upright ariseth Light in the Darkness.

The *Observation* that results from the Words is this; (Pray observe it:)

Doct. *That when the Condition of God's People is Darkest, God causes a Light to shine unto them. To the Upright ariseth* Light *in Darkness.*

This

This *Propoſition* has two *Branches*; I ſhall ſpeak of them diſtinctly.

1. That the *Upright* may have their *Night* : it may be a *Dark* ſeaſon.

2. That a *Morning-light* ariſes to them in the midſt of all their *Darkneſs*.

Firſt,

That the *Upright*, thoſe whom God *loves*, they may have their *Night*, they may have a very *Dark* ſeaſon : They may have a two-fold *Night*.

They may have { 1. A Night of *Affliction*. 2. A Night of *Deſertion*.

1. They may have a Night of *Affliction* : (for Godlineſs does not exempt from Trouble.) A *Dark Cloud* may ſet upon their *Name*, upon their *Eſtate* : God may lay an *Embargo* upon all their Outward Comforts. In *Ruth* 1. 20. *Call me not* Naomi (that is, *Fair*, or *Pleaſant* :) *call me* Mara : *For the Almighty hath dealt very* [*bitterly*] *with me.*

2. The Godly may have not only a *Night* of *Affliction*, but they may have a *Night* of *Deſertion*. God may with-draw the ſmiling Beams of his *Favour*, and then 'tis *Night* with them indeed, then nothing follows but *Darkneſs*. In *Job* 6. 4. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poiſon whereof drinketh up my Spirit.*

It alludes (ſaies *Druſius*) unto the Cuſtom of the *Perſians*, who in their Warrs did dip their Arrows in Poiſon, that they might ſhoot their Enemies with the more deadly Wound. Thus the God of Heaven, he may ſometimes ſhoot the poiſoned Arrow of *Deſertion*, and then the Soul is *Benighted*, it is in the *Dark*.

Though God has the *Heart* of a *Father*, yet he may ſometimes have the *Face* of an *Enemy*.

And, the Lord may cauſe a *Cloud* of *Darkneſs* upon the Soul, and ſuſpend the Beams of Spiritual *Comfort*, for theſe two *Reaſons*.

Reaſon 1.

The Darkneſs of Deſertion, it is, *to quicken the exerciſe of Grace.*

For *Grace* ſometimes acts *higheſt*, when *Comfort* is *loweſt*. In *Jonah* 2. 4. *I ſaid I am caſt out of*

of thy ſight, yet will I look again towards thy Holy Temple. That is, I will look to *Chriſt*, of whom the *Temple* was but a *Type*.

Faith and *Patience*, like two *Stars*, ſhine brighteſt in a dark *Night* of *Deſertion*. We are taken with the *Comforts*, but God is more taken with the *Actings of our Grace*.

Reaſon 2.

The Lord may cauſe a *Dark Cloud* to be upon the Righteous, a *Cloud* of *Deſertion*, *That he may hereby awaken, excite, and ſtir up in them a Spirit of Prayer*.

If ever the Soul will pray to purpoſe, 'tis *now*, in an hour of *Deſertion*. Fathers may *hide* their Faces from their Children, to make them cry after them the more; God ſometimes *hides* the light of his Face, that we may cry after him the louder: As *David*, in *Pſal.* 143. 7. *Hear me ſpeedily, O Lord, my Spirit faileth: O! hide not thy Face from me.* My Beloved, *Deſertion*, it is a ſhort *Hell*. *Jonah* called the Whales belly, *the belly of Hell*; Why ſo? Becauſe he was *Deſerted* there. And if ever *Jonah* would *Pray* to purpoſe, it was now, that he might get out of the *belly of Hell*. Jonah 2. 2. *Out of the belly of Hell I cryed unto thee, and thou heardeſt my voice.*

And that's the first Branch of the Doctrine, *That God's People, they may have a dark Night*: A Night of *Affliction*, when God lays an Embargo upon all their *Comforts*: And a Night of *Desertion*, which is a *short Hell*.

Secondly, The second Branch of the *Proposition* is this, *That now a Morning Light shines upon the Righteous.* ---- *Unto the Upright there ariseth Light in the Darkness. Lux oritur*, A *Morning Light* shines. The Philosopher says, *Non dantur puræ tenebræ.* When 'tis *Darkest*, when there's *Midnight*, God will cause *Light* some way or other, to break forth to the *Upright in Heart*. In Psal. 18. 28. *The Lord will light my Candle.* As if *David* had said, Though at present all my Comforts seem to be blown out, and I am left in the dark, yet the Lord will light my Candle: he will make *Light to arise in Obscurity.*

A two-fold Light arising to the Upright.

There is a twofold *Light* that God causes to arise upon the Upright when they are in the dark.

There is { 1. An *Outward Light* } that he makes
{ 2. An *Inward Light* } to shine.

1. There

1. There is an *Outward Light* ſhines; that is, God does oftentimes cauſe a *Light* of *Proſperity* to ariſe upon his People: that's a *Light* in *Darkneſs*. When God by his Providence alters the Face of things, and cauſes *Peace* and *Proſperity* in the Tabernacles of the Righteous, here's *Light* ariſing in *Darkneſs*. In Pſal. 29. 3. *When his Candle ſhined upon my Head.* --- What was this *Candle*? It was nothing elſe but the *Candle* of *Proſperity* that ſhined upon him. And in Pſal. 132. 17. *I have ordained a Lamp for mine Anointed*: That is, *Outward Bleſſings*, *Gracious Proſperity*, ſhall ſhine as a *Lamp* upon *David's* Succeſſor. *I have ordained a Lamp for mine Anointed*; I will give *outward Glory* in the Kingdom; Here's an outward Light. The Lord can on a ſudden alter the Scene of Providence, and turn *the ſhadow of Death*, *into the Light of the Morning*.

2. God cauſes an *Inward Light* to ariſe upon the Upright, when they are in the dark, ---

1. A *Light* of *Grace*.
2. A *Light* of *Joy*.

Firſt,

First, The Light of *Grace*, he makes that ſhine. In the midſt of *Darkneſs*, let the *Darkneſs* be what it will, a dram of *Faith* in the Soul, is a ſpark of *Light*. When the Tree has no *Leaves* nor *Bloſſoms* to be ſeen, but ſeems dead in *Autumn*, yet there may be *ſap* in the *Root* of the Vine: When our *Outward Comforts* are as it were *dead*, there may be a *Seed of Grace* preſerved in the *Heart*: and this *Grace* in the *darkeſt* condition, it is the dawning of *Light* in the Soul.

Secondly, God cauſes a *Light* of Spiritual *Joy* and *Comfort* to ariſe upon his Saints. And truly, this *Light* of *Spiritual Joy*, it is ſomewhat of the glimmering of the Light of *Heaven*, this is ſome glimpſe of the Light of *Paradiſe*. In Iſa. 12. 1. ------ *Thine Anger is turned away, and thou comfortedſt me.* The Light of *Divine Joy* in the Soul, it is *ſweet* and *raviſhing*: it makes all *dark Shadows flee away*. *Spiritual Joy*, cauſes a *Jubilation*, and does as far exceed all *earthly Comforts*, as *Heaven* does *Earth*.

Thus

Thus you ſee, that in *Midnight*, in the *darkeſt Cloud* of Providence, God cauſes ſome *Light* or other to ariſe upon the *Upright*.

My Brethren, 'tis *only God* can make it *lightſome* in a *dark troubled* Soul As when the Sun is ſet, none can make it riſe again but God: So, (My Beloved,) when 'tis *Sun-ſet* in the Soul, and the Dew of Tears fall from the Eye, none can make *Day-light* in the Soul but only God. *Miniſters* they may *Preach* Comfort to us, but God only can make us *feel* Comfort; *Miniſters* they may bring a Cordial to us, and ſet it by us, but none but God can pour this Cordial into the *Heart*; in Pſal. 4. 7. *Thou haſt put Gladneſs in my Heart.*

Before I come to the Application, here's a Queſtion ariſes, ----

Why does God make Light to ariſe to his People, in an hour of Darkneſs?

I anſwer: for three Reaſons, ----

1, *That God may hereby fulfil his Promiſe*: He has *ſaid it*, that *he will enlighten his People*: In Iſa. *Reaſons of the Point.*

Isa. 42. 16. *I will make* Darkness Light *before them.* God's *Honour* lies upon it, to make good his Promise, and to cause *Light* to arise to his People in *Obscurity.* The Lord's *Promise*, it is his *Bond.* When one has given *Bond* to another, he cannot go back. Though sometimes God's Promise may be *long in Travail*, yet at last it *brings forth* Deliverance.

Two things in God never fail, ...

First, His *Compassions* fail not, *Lam.* 3. 22.

Secondly, His *Faithfulness* fails not, *Psal.* 82. 33. God may sometimes *delay* a Promise, but he will not *deny* his Promise: God may sometimes *change* his Promise, turn a *Temporal* Promise into a *Spiritual*, and so pay us in a *better Coin*, but will never *break* his Promise. He has *said* he will cause a *Light* to go before his People in all their *Darkness.*

2. God may cause *Light* and *Joy* to arise to his People, because *they help to enlighten others.* When other Christians are in the *dark* of *Ignorance*, they enlighten them with *Knowledg*; when they are in the *dark* of *Affliction*, ready to *perish*, they *feed* them, and they *relieve* them, and their Almes

minister

miniſter *Light of Joy* and *Comfort* to the Poor; when they are in *Deſertion*, why God's People, they ſpeak a word of *Comfort* to their Hearts: They *enlighten* thoſe that ſit in *Darkneſs*, and therefore ſurely God will not let thoſe want *Light*, who help to *enlighten others*; if they ſhould come to be *benighted* with *Sorrow*, why God will be ſure to ſpring in with ſome *Light* to them, who have given *Light to others*.

3. *God* will cauſe *Light* to ariſe in *Darkneſs* to his People, either he will *ſupport them in Trouble*, or *deliver them out of Trouble*, becauſe God ſees that *they have great need of ſome dawnings of Light*, they *need ſome Morning-Star* now to appear; they would *faint away*, they would be *diſcouraged in ſerving God*, if ſometimes he did not turn the *Shadow of Death* into the *Light of the Morning*. Should the ſick Patient always have *purging Phyſick* given him, why ſurely if he had no *Cordials* he would ſoon *faint away*. *God knows our frame*, he ſees our *Spirits would fail before him*, if he did always let a dark *Cloud* dwell upon us; and

therefore, *in Judgment he remembers Mercy*, and cauſes the *Day-Star* of Comfort and Joy to ſpring up in a Gracious Soul. God will not ſuffer it always to be *dark* in the Hearts of his People, leſt they ſhould touch upon the Rock of *Deſpair*. The *Muſician*, he will not ſtretch the Strings of his *Viol* too hard, leſt they ſhould chance to break.

Thus you ſee why the wiſe God ſees it fitteſt to cauſe *Light* to ariſe unto his People, in the midſt of all their *Clouds* of *Darkneſs*.

And ſo much briefly for the Doctriual part.

I proceed now to the *Application*:

1. By way of *Information*.
2. By way of *Conſolation*.

1. *Uſe of Information.*

Firſt, By way of Information; Here are ſeveral *Inferences*.

1. *In-*

Inference 1.

1. See from this Text, the *Infinite Goodneſs of God* to his Children in all caſes that may fall out in this World, whether *Affliction* or *Deſertion*. O the goodneſs of God! in the midſt of darkneſs he cauſes ſome Light or other to break forth. God does checker his work of Providence; with dark *Clouds* he intermixes bright *Stars*. Juſt like the Limner who mingles with dark and black Colours, bright Colours; thus does God in his Providence: the condition of the Saints on Earth is never ſo black and cloudy, but ſome *Rain-bow* appears in the Cloud of Providence. In Pſal. 138.7. *Though I walk in the midſt of Trouble, thou wilt revive me.* Every ſtep I take, I tread upon *Thorns*, I walk in the midſt of *Trouble*, among *Clouds*, but thou wilt, Lord, *revive me*. *Joſeph*, he was in the *Priſon*, there was *Darkneſs*; but (the Text ſaies) *the Lord was with Joſeph*, there was *Light*; *Gen.* 39. 2. *Jacob* had the Hollow of his Thigh put out of joint in Wreſtling: there was a dark Providence;

but he ſaw God's Face at that very time, and there the Lord bleſſed him: here was *Light* ariſing to him, *Gen.* 32. 30. *Job* loſt all that ever he had, he was *Rough-caſt* with Boils and Sores; there was a dark Providence: Ay but hereby *Job*'s Grace was *proved*, and *improved*, and God gave him an honourable teſtimony, *That he was upright*; and God gave him double the *Eſtate* that ever he had before: here was *Light* ariſing to him in his *Darkneſs*, *Job* 42. 10. And thus God does mix *Light* with his Peoples *Darkneſs*. As in the Ark there was *Manna* laid up with the *Rod*; ſo 'tis in God's Providences to his People: with the *Rod* of *Affliction*, there's ſome *Manna*, ſome *Light*, ſome *Comfort* that God cauſes to ſpring up: *Manna* with the *Rod*. O the goodneſs of God! who would not ſerve this God? in the *darkeſt Night* that is, he keeps alive ſome *ſparks of Light* in the Hearts of his People, which may ſuppreſs their *Murmuring*, and may miniſter matter of *Thanksgiving*. That's the firſt Inference.

Infe-

Inference 2.

2. If it be God's work and design to cause *Light* and *Comfort* to arise to the *Righteous*: why then, how *contrary* do they act to God, whose work it is to cause *Darkness* and *Sorrow* to the *Righteous*? God's design and theirs cross each other. There is a *Woe* belongs to them that *make the Hearts of the Righteous sad*, In Ezek. 13. 22. *God* is creating *Light* for his People, and the *Enemies* of the *Church*, they are laying *snares* for them; God he is pouring *Wine* and *Oil* into his Peoples Wounds, and the *Enemies* of *Sion*, they are pouring *Vinegar* into the Wounds; how contrary do these act to God? the Children of *Romish Babylon*, they are at this day plotting the Ruine of God's People: they would turn the Church of God into an *Aceldama*, *a Field of Blood*. The Lord, he makes *Light* to arise to the Godly, and the Wicked, they labour to make *Darkness* and *Sorrow* arise to them. But, such as *lay snares* for the Righteous, God will *rain snares* upon

upon them: Pſal. 11. 6. *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, Fire and Brimſtone.* The Wicked Enemies of the Church, they ſtrike at Chriſt through his *Members Sides*; and let them know that 'tis kicking againſt a Rock. Chriſt will be too hard for all his Enemies; he will be victorious at laſt: the Enemies, they may bid defiance to Heaven, they may ſet up their *Standards* againſt Heaven: but God always comes off Conqueror, and ſets up his *Trophies.* If there be either *Juſtice* in *Heaven*, or *Fire* in *Hell*, the Enemy ſhall not go unpuniſhed. Pſal. 11. 13. *He hath ordained his Arrows againſt the Perſecutors.* God has his Arrow upon the String to ſhoot at Perſecutors, and be aſſured God never miſſeth his mark. *Dioclesian* raſed down the Chriſtians Temples, and burnt their Bibles: but God was avenged on him; he was afterwards ſtricken with Phrency, and poiſoned himſelf. Perſecutors never thrive upon that bloody Trade.

Infe-

Inference 3.

See here the Great *Difference* between the *Wicked* and the *Godly*; there's a vaſt *Difference*; The Godly in all their *Darkneſs* that befalls them, they have ſome *Light* ariſing to them; the Wicked in all their outward Comforts, they have ſome *Darkneſs* ariſing to them; in the middſt of all their Jollity and mirth, why ſtill there's a *Dark Cloud* hangs over them: Conſcience *chides* them, Scripture *threatens them*, (which is like the *Hand-writing upon the Wall*;) In *Pſal.* 68. 21. *God ſhall wound the Head of his Enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch a one as goeth on ſtill in his Treſpaſſes.* A ſinner ſtill, in all his lightſom condition, his outward Mirth, his Joy, he may ſee ſome Clouds of Darkneſs: God's Threatnings are againſt him: God's *Curſe* hangs over him, and that Curſe it *blaſts* wherever it comes. A wicked man, an impenitent hardned ſinner, he goes every day in fear of Arreſting; Death may Arreſt him. There remains nothing for him, but φοβερὰ δὲ τις ἐκδοχὴ: *A fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery*

fiery indignation, as the Apoſtle ſaies, in *Heb.* 10. 27. A hardned impenitent ſinner is in an ill caſe; if he dies, he drops into the *Grave* and into *Hell* both at once. God is brewing for him a *Deadly Cup*. In *Pſal.* 75. 8. *In the hand of the Lord there is a Cup, and the Wine is Red: it is full of mixture, and he poureth out the ſame: but the Dregs thereof all the Wicked of the Earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them.*

What's this *Red Wine* in the *Cup*? 'Tis nothing elſe but the *Fiery Wrath of God*: that's the *Red Wine*; Wine *burnt* with his Wrath. And (the Text ſaies) this Cup is *full of mixture*, it's a *mixed Cup* the ſinner muſt drink. What's the *mixed Cup*? The *Worm of Conſcience*, and the *Fire of Hell*: here's a *mixed cup*; and the wicked ſhall be *ever* drinking of this Cup: God will never ſay, *Tranſeat--- Let this Cup paſs away from* the *Damned*: No, they muſt be *ever* drinking the dregs of this Cup of Wrath.

Methinks this Scripture ſhould be a *Cooling Card* unto all wicked men, and damp all their *Mirth* and *Jollity*: *Doomſday-Darkneſs* is coming upon them. It was ſad news brought to *Saul* (and no wonder when the *Devil* brought the

the news:) In the 1 *Sam.* 28. 19. ſaies *Satan* there in *Samuel's* Mantle, to *Saul*, *To morrow ſhalt thou be with me.* O dreadful news, to take up a mans Quarters among the Damned! To day a ſinner is among his *Cups*, he is *Sporting* with his *Luſts*: now he is in his *Mirth*: and perhaps *to morrow* he may be with the *Devil* and his *Angels*, where *Saul* is.

Inference 4.

The fourth *Inference* is this: Does God cauſe *Light* to ſpring up to the Upright in all their *Darknes*? Why then ſee from hence the *difference* between *Earth* and *Heaven*. Here in this World there's a *Mixture* of *Darkneſs* and *Light*: there's *Clouds* mixt with their *Stars*: *Dark Providences* as well as *Light*.

But now, in *Heaven* it is otherwiſe, there's no *Darkneſs* there: nothing but pure *Light*, pure *Bliſs*: and therefore *Heaven* it is call'd *an Inheritance in Light*, Col. 1. 12.

The Philoſopher ſaies, φῶς ἐςὶ κάλλιςον: *Light is the moſt glorious Creature*, 'tis the Beauty of the World. What were the World without

 Light,

Light, but a *Dark Priſon*? Here's the Beauty of Heaven, 'tis *an Inheritance in Light*. Heaven it is a *Diaphanum*, or a *bright-Body*, all over embroidered with *Light* and *Glory*: There are no *Eclipſes* there; There are no dark ſhadows to be ſeen, but all is Orient Brightneſs, Celeſtiall Glory.

In Heaven, Chriſt, *the Son of Righteouſneſs*, will alwayes be ſhining with his illuſtrious Beams: In *Rev.* 21. 23. *The Lamb is the Light thereof.* O how ſhould we long to be in that bleſſed place, that Paradiſe of God, that is ſo Adorned with the bright illuſtrious Rays of Celeſtial Glory! There's nothing but pure Light, nothing but Glory ſhining in its perfection.

So much for the firſt *Uſe*.

Uſe 2.

The ſecond *Uſe* is of *Conſolation* for the Church and People of God. This Text is a Pillar of *Light*, a Breaſt of Conſolation, *Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs*. Does God make *Light*, and *Joy*, and *Peace*, to ariſe

ariſe to the Righteous? Why then ſhould we deſpond, or throw away our Anchor? Why ſhould we deſpair? Why may we not hope that the *Morning-Star* of *Deliverance* and *Mercy* may yet appear unto this Iſland? Why (I ſay) ſhould we deſpond, when 'tis *God*'s great Project and Deſign, to *lighten* his Peoples *Darkneſs*?

I confeſs, things have a bad *Aſpect*, a dark *Face* at preſent, *Gray hairs are here and there*. My Brethren, we ſee how things go: *Sin* grows *higher*: *Enemies* grow *bolder*: *Diviſions* grow *wider*. Theſe are bad Symptoms of a dying Patient.

England is like that *Ship* in the Goſpel, which was almoſt covered over with Waves. Here's that may humble us, and ſet our Eyes abroach with Tears.

Yet, that we may not mourn without hope, let me tell you, there are ſome *ſparks of Light*, that do ſeem to ariſe to us in the *Dark*. *Unto the Upright there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs*. Let me come as a *Dove* with an *Olive-branch* of Peace in my mouth, *that* that is ſome ſpark of *Light* to us.

Grounds of Hope for England.

1. That there are many *Upright ones* in this Nation : That's a Spark of *Light*. The Text ſaies, *Light ariſeth to the Upright* : 'Tis to be hoped there are many ſuch in this Iſland. Were the Godly removed, (as 'tis the deſign of ſome to deſtroy them :) God would make *Quick work* with the Nation, he would ſoon *break up Houſe* here, God would quickly ſink the Ship of *Church* and *State*, if he had not ſome of his Elect in it. But for the ſake of thoſe that are *Upright*, God may be pleaſed yet a while to Reprieve the Nation, and Adjourn *Englands* Funeral a while longer. In *Iſa.* 65. 8. *As the new Wine is found in the Cluſter, and one ſaith, Deſtroy it not, for a Bleſſing is in it : So will I do for my Servants ſakes, that I may not deſtroy them all.* Though it cannot be denied but our Vine, in this Land planted, bears much very bad fruit, yet doubtleſs there are ſome good Cluſters in the Vine, and for theſe God may ſpare the Vine, and ſay, *Is there not a bleſſing in it?*

The Saints of God ſtay his Hand when he is going to ſtrike. In *Gen.* 19. 22. *Haſte thee* (ſaies

(ſaies the Angel to *Lot*, Haſte thee to *Zoar*) *eſcape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.* q. d. Thou holdeſt my hand, I cannot ſtrike till thou art gone. The Saints of God, though others look upon them with a contemptible eye, they are the Safety of the Land, God will do much for their ſakes. The *Upright*, they are *the Excellent of the Earth*, Pſal. 16. 3. Others are but the *Lumber*, God knows bad *Lumber*: Theſe are the *Jewels*. Mal. 3. 17.

The Saints of God, they are the *Chariots and Horſmen of Iſrael*: They are the very *Flower* and *Cream* of the Creation, they are the *Glory* of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. And for their ſakes God may yet cauſe *Light* to ariſe, and he may be propitious, and his Arm may bring Salvation.

2. Another Spark of *Light* ariſing in *England's Darkneſs*, is this, That yet God is pleaſed wonderfully to keep up in his People a Spirit of Prayer; They cry mightily: Certainly God will not ſay to us, *Seek ye me in vain.*

The *Spartans Walls* were their *Spears*. The

Wall

Wall and Bullwark of a Land is Devout Prayer. Whole Vollies of Sighs and Groans are every day ſent up to Heaven for Mercy, here's a Spark of *Light* in our *Darkneſs*: God hears theſe Sighs.

Pray obſerve, when the Lord intends to pour out the Vial of his Indignation, and to bring wrath upon a People, he preſently ſtops all the ſluces of Prayer, no more Prayer to be made. In *Jer.* 7. 16. *Pray not for this People.* God has not ſaid ſo yet concerning *England.* Prayer is a powerful Orator for Mercy, and may cauſe Light to ſpring up yet. The Key of Prayer, oyled with Tears, and turn'd with the Hand of Faith, unlocks God's Bowels. Prayer, when 'tis importunate, it ſtaves off Wrath from a Land. In *Exod.* 32. 10. Saies God to *Moſes*, Let *me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot againſt them.* Why, what did *Moſes* do? He only Prayed. *Fervent Prayer it overcomes the Omnipotent*, as *Luther* ſaies. Prayer it finds God *Free*, but it leaves him *Bound. Hæc Domina Mundi fructuat Solum.* ---

Prayer ties God's Hands: It ſtaves off Judgment. This (my Brethren) lets in ſome dawning

ing of *Light* to this *Land* this day, in the midſt of all our *Clouds of Obſcurity*: Prayer is made for the Church. This gives us ſome ground to hope, that God will not wholly leave us.

Eſpecially when we conſider, Chriſt is our Advocate; He prays over our Prayers again, ſprinkles them with his Blood, and perfumes them with his bleſſed Odours: and ſo they go up to Heaven as ſweet Incenſe. In *Rev.* 8. 4. *The ſmoke of the Incenſe which came with the Prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God, out of the Angels hand.*

3. And laſtly, Another ſpark of *Light* ariſing in our *Dark* Hemiſphere, it is this, God's Compaſſions, his Bowel-Mercies. Mercy, it is God's Darling Attribute, that he loves moſt of all to magnifie: *Mercy pleaſeth him*, Micah 7. 18. Though *We* don't pleaſe God, yet *Mercy* pleaſes him.

Juſtice is God's *ſtrange Work*, Iſa. 28. 21. He is not ſo much uſed to that: But *Mercy* it is his *proper Work*, it flows *naturally* from him, as the Honey from the Bee, or as the Myrrhe drops

drops from the Myrrhe-tree. While God ſo delights in this Darling Attribute of Mercy, why ſhould we deſpair? Why may not Mercy give the caſting Voice for this Nation? In *Iſa.* 63. 9. *In his Love and in his Pity he Redeemed them.* O! *Love* and *Pity* will do great things. ---*In his Love and in his Pity he Redeemed them.*

God's Mercy 'tis not only *Free*, ſending out Pardons where it pleaſes; but here's the Comfort, God's Mercy can as well *Heal* as it can *Save*: 'Tis a *Healing* Mercy. In *Hoſea* 14. 4. *I will heal their Backſlidings.*

Pray obſerve: Mercy, what can't it do? it can *reclaim* the *Stubborn*: it can *ſoften* the *Impenitent*: it can *bring back* thoſe that are *going aſtray* from God. God's Mercy, it can as well give *Repentance* to a Nation as *Deliverance*; Mercy can *deſtroy* the *Sins* of the Nation, and yet *ſave* the Nation. 'Tis a *Healing* Mercy: --- *I will heal their Backſlidings.*

Why, theſe are then ſome Dawnings, ſome ſparks of *Light*, that God cauſes to ariſe in the midſt of all our *Darkneſs.*

Queſt.

Queſt.

But here's a Queſtion, (and ſo I haſten to an end.) *You will ſay unto me, But things they ſtill look very* bad *and* dark, *and we would have more* Light; *now what muſt we do, how muſt we carry our ſelves, till God makes* Light *to ariſe to us in our* Darkneſs? *till Mercy comes riding to* England *in the Chariot of Salvation?*

Anſw.

I anſwer in theſe two or three things: —

1. In this time of our *Darkneſs* and *Cloudineſs*, the firſt thing we do, let us go into our Chambers. In Iſa. 26. 20. *Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee*: hide thy ſelf.

There are two *Chambers* that we muſt now go into: —

1. The Chambers of our *Hearts*.
2. The Chambers of the *Promiſes*.

Firſt, Let us go in this time of *Darkneſs* into the *Chambers* of our *Hearts*, by ſerious *Meditation*, and *Self-examination*. Let us in the firſt place ſearch our Evidences for Heaven, caſt up our Accounts, ſee how the caſe ſtands between God and our Souls. Let's bring our Graces to the Touch-Stone: What *Faith* have we? are we hid by *Faith* in the bleeding Wounds of Chriſt? What *Love* to God have we? does Conſcience witneſs that we not only *ſerve* him, but *love* him? *Our Heart and Fleſh cry out for the Living God*? Are we carried every day up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot of *Love*? Is it thus with us? O let us enter into theſe Chambers of our *Hearts*, ſet our Houſe in order, our *Souls*: that's our great work now. My Beloved, when things are dark *without*, we had need have all clear *within*, to have *Conſcience* ſmile.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let us go into the *Chambers* of God's *Promiſes*, and there let's a while hide our ſelves, during this black *Cloud* of Providence. O the *ſweet Promiſes* of God, where our Souls may take Sanctuary! God has promiſed *Comfort* to all his *Mourners*, *Matth.* 5.4. God has promiſed that he will *ſtrengthen* the *infirm*; Iſa 40.29. *to them that have no might, he increaſes ſtrength.* God has promiſed a *Crown of Glory* to the *Conqueror*, *Rev.* 2. 10. He has given it under Hand and Seal, *he will never leave us, nor forſake us.* Heb. 13. 5.

O my Brethren, here's our Wiſdom: let us now by Faith go and hide our ſelves, in the *Chambers* of theſe Divine *Promiſes*.

And that's the firſt thing we muſt do in this *Dark Hour*: *Go into our Chambers.*

2. Having done this, if you ask me yet further, what we muſt do in this time of Darkneſs, till God makes Light ſpring up to us? I anſwer: having got into our *Chambers*, let us

Commit our ſelves aud our Caſe to God, that he would ſafe-guard and keep us. And this I ground upon that Scripture, in Pſal. 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord; he will bring it to paſs.* In the *Hebrew* it is *Roll* thy way upon the Lord. This is now our work: Even as the *Client* commits himſelf and his Cauſe to his *Counſel* that he imploys, to plead for him: or as the *Orphan* commits himſelf unto the Care and Tutilage of his *Guardian*; ſo ſhould we commit our ſelves to God, and devolve all our cares upon him. *Commit thy way unto the Lord.* Let us do our Duty, and truſt God with our Safety. Brethren, it is our work to *truſt Care*: it is God's work to *take Care*.

3. In this time of *Darkneſs*, having got into our *Chambers*, and *committed* our ſelves unto God; let us now patiently *wait God's time*, till he ſhall make a *Light* to ariſe in our *Horizon*: wait on God, till he turns our *Darkneſs* into the *Light of the Morning*. God can on a ſudden, with a word of his Mouth, ſcatter and diſperſe the blackeſt Clouds that do appear; God can create *Light*. God can ſtrike a *ſtreight*

ſtroke

ſtroke with a *crooked Inſtrument*: He can bring *Good* out of *Evil*. God can deliver his People by means *unthought of*: nay, he can *deliver* them that very way that they think he will *deſtroy* them in. Who would ever have thought that God ſhould have made a *Cauſ-way* for his People to have marched through on, in the midſt of the *Sea*? that God ſhould have made Heaven a *Grainary*, to drop down *Manna* for his People to feed on? O *wait* till *Light* ſpring up. God he can make uſe of the *Enemy* to do *his Work*: he can play *his Game* by his *Enemies hand*. In ſhort: God is able to *remove* the Mountains that lie in our way, or elſe (if he pleaſe) he can *leap over* the Mountains: In Cant. 2. 8. *He cometh leaping upon the Mountains*. Therefore, my Brethren, till *Light* ſpring up, let us *wait with Patience*: *Light will ariſe unto the Upright*.

My Brethren, I will ſay but this: The Mercies we pray for, and are in expectation of, they are worth waiting for. To ſee the *Golden Fleet* of *Prayer* come home laden with large and rich returns of Mercy: to ſee the

Lilly

Lilly and the *Roſe* united, *Truth* and *Peace*: To ſee *Popery abandoned*, and not one Stone left upon another: To ſee *Prophaneneſs diſcountenanced* and *diſgraced*: to ſee the *Beauty of Holineſs ſhine forth in our Hemiſphere*: To ſee *Jeſus Chriſt ride in Triumph in the Chariot of his Goſpel*: To ſee the *Righteous* had in *Honour* and *Renown*, and be *like the Wings of a Dove covered with Silver*; Surely theſe are Mercies ſo eminent, that they are well *worth waiting for*.

And therefore, let not Patience be out of breath. Having got into your *Chambers*, and *committed your Cauſe* to God, now get into a *waiting* poſture: *wait* till ſome *Light* ſpring up to God's Church. I will ſhut up all with one Scripture, (which may encourage humble waiting:) In Iſa. 30. 18. *The Lord is a God of Judgment; Bleſſed are all they that wait for him.*

FINIS.